UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-NINTH SESSION

Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
56th meeting
held on
Wednesday, 14 June 1995
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 56th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. TEIRLINCK (Belgium)

later: Mr. BARIMANI (Islamic Republic of Iran)
(Vice-Chairman)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 132: ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY ASPECTS OF THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS (continued)

(a) FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS (continued) (A/49/717 and Corr.1 and 2 and A/49/778)

1. Miss ARAGON (Philippines), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the support account for peace-keeping operations had been established in January 1990 to rationalize the use of overload posts already funded from peace-keeping operations. In effect the aim had been to provide the Secretariat with a means of establishing posts at Headquarters in a more flexible manner. That purpose should be maintained, as should the current methodology of funding the posts on the basis of 8.5 per cent of the civilian component costs of each peace-keeping operation.

2. The Group of 77 and China had taken note of the definition of core and non-core activities and concurred with the Advisory Committee's view that any attempt to set criteria for the funding of core and non-core posts by the regular budget and support account might lead to endless political controversy. Current procedures for the approval of the regular budget should be followed, and it was not appropriate to consider regular budget posts in the context of the support account. The Group of 77 and China therefore fully agreed with ACABQ that the programme budget must be determined on the basis of proposals of the Secretary-General submitted in accordance with the Financial Regulations and General Assembly resolution 41/213.

3. Resources for the support account must be used for the purposes for which they were authorized, in accordance with the Financial and Staff Regulations and Rules. She agreed with ACABQ that there was a need to maintain the concept of the support account and to restore simplicity to procedures for approval of support account expenditures with the aim of giving the Secretary-General the capacity to respond quickly and effectively to requirements for the backstopping of peace-keeping operations at Headquarters. Control and monitoring by Member States should not turn into micromanagement of support account activities.

4. The Group of 77 and China endorsed the Advisory Committee's observations and recommendations (A/49/904, paras. 24-28) on resource requirements to be charged to the support account to December 1995. Those delegations shared the Controller's concern regarding the difficulty of recruiting staff because staff resources for temporary posts had been authorized as general temporary assistance, and noted that the unencumbered balances in the support account could be attributed to that situation. She agreed with the representative of Norway that present funding arrangements for temporary posts ran counter to good budgetary practice, and welcomed the Advisory Committee's intention to seek to ensure that the use of general temporary assistance was consistent with the purposes for which it was intended.

5. Miss PEÑA (Mexico) said that her delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee's conclusions and recommendations. The rationale for the support

account, as a means of providing the Secretariat with flexibility in backstopping peace-keeping operations, remained valid. She agreed that the General Assembly, rather than seeking to identify core and non-core activities in respect of each post funded from the support account, should refocus on the fundamental objective of the account with a view to improving the use of resources.

6. Accordingly her delegation endorsed the Advisory Committee's recommendations (A/49/904, para. 22) to the effect that the support account should continue to be funded on the basis of 8.5 per cent of the civilian component; that the Advisory Committee should consider specific requests for variations of posts and other resources from previously approved levels, and report thereon to the General Assembly on the actions it had taken vis-à-vis the support account, a procedure which was consistent with General Assembly resolution 49/233; and that requests under the support account should be justified not only on the basis of workload and operational need but also in the context of the totality of resources available to the unit or programme concerned.

7. Her delegation shared the view of the Advisory Committee regarding restoration of the original procedure for approval of support account expenditures, and agreed that the new arrangements proposed should become effective on 1 January 1996, to which end it was essential for the Advisory Committee to be given appropriate information on the support account, including unencumbered balances. Lastly, she endorsed the arrangements proposed by the Advisory Committee (A/49/904, paras. 24-28) with respect to resource requirements for 1995.

8. Mr. HANSON (Canada) said that it was regrettable that debate on the support account had lasted so long without any conclusion being reached. His delegation had always supported the Secretary-General's proposals in connection with the support account, and was very concerned at the inadequate support given to peace-keeping operations, particularly in terms of personnel. It was not surprising that much of the information required by the Fifth Committee and ACABQ arrived late and was of inadequate quality.

9. The Advisory Committee's recommendation that the Fifth Committee should defer action on the conversion of the remaining positions funded from general temporary assistance to temporary posts until September 1995 meant in practical terms that a decision would be delayed until December 1995. Since the funding related to 1995 the Secretariat would continue to have serious difficulty in filling the posts.

10. Regarding the Advisory Committee's comments on the redeployment of 10 posts from the Finance Management and Support Service, Department of Peace-keeping Operations, to the Peace-keeping Financing Division of the Department of Administration and Management, the Secretary-General clearly had the right, as chief administrative officer, to move financial staff from one unit to another. Since the move was intended to improve the efficiency of budget preparation, his delegation could not support the Advisory Committee's recommendation in that regard. With respect to the recommendation in paragraph 22 (b) of the ACABQ

report (A/49/904), there was no reason for the General Assembly to give decision-making powers to a technical and advisory committee.

11. It would be preferable to take a more strategic approach to the support account issue. Rather than focusing on posts and workload statistics, the emphasis should be on inputs and outputs. The input, of 8.5 per cent of the civilian component, was adequate. The outputs included the information provided to ACABQ and the Fifth Committee.

12. The growth in peace-keeping had severely tested the Organization's ability to administer peace-keeping operations, essentially because of lack of adequate resources and inefficient procedures in the Secretariat.

13. His delegation would welcome a review by the Office of Internal Oversight Services, Board of Auditors or Joint Inspection Unit of the efficiency and effectiveness of support account activities. Once the peace-keeping budget cycle had been regularized, the Secretary-General should present an annual budget for the support account contemporaneously with the other peace-keeping budgets.

14. Mr. KUZNETZOV (Russian Federation) supported the approach outlined in the Secretary-General's report (A/49/717) and agreed that United Nations peace-keeping capabilities should be strengthened. The concept of the support account had proved to be viable and efficient and his delegation saw no reason to modify the current system. However, certain adjustments had to be made in order to reflect changing conditions. To that end he wished to see clearer and more detailed criteria for using the support account and a tightening up of the procedures used by the Secretariat in administering it. He was sure that over time the Secretariat would refine its administrative procedures and take into account any observations made by Member States.

15. His delegation endorsed the recommendations contained in paragraphs 22 and 23 of the Advisory Committee's report and would be prepared to return to the issue in the light of the proposed analysis of the operation of the support account if the proposal was adopted.

16. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) said that in 1994 the Secretary-General had taken a number of initiatives to improve the Secretariat's capacity in the area of financing peace-keeping operations, in particular by establishing clearer areas of responsibility. In that connection full responsibility for accounting and budgeting with respect to peace-keeping had been assigned to the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts. The Department of Peace-keeping Operations was fully responsible for operational requirements. In accordance with that streamlining of responsibilities, it had been decided to transfer 10 support account posts from the Department of Peace-keeping Operations to the Department of Administration and Management.

AGENDA ITEM 116: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING FORCES IN THE MIDDLE EAST: (continued)

(a) UNITED NATIONS DISENGAGEMENT OBSERVER FORCE (continued) (A/49/533/Add.1 and A/49/785/Add.1)

(b) UNITED NATIONS INTERIM FORCE IN LEBANON (continued) (A/49/644/Add.1 and A/49/785/Add.1)

17. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) recalled that the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) had been established in 1974, and that its mandate had subsequently been renewed for six-month periods, with the current period expiring at the end of November 1995. The General Assembly had already taken action to permit continued funding of UNDOF.

18. The performance report for UNDOF for the period 1 December 1993 to 30 November 1994 reflected an overall saving of $805,000 gross, mainly as a result of savings in transport, accommodation and equipment. There was an unencumbered balance of $891,000 net, to be credited to Member States at the time of the next assessment.

19. Turning to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), he said that the financial performance report before the Committee covered the period 1 February 1994 to 31 January 1995. The current mandate expired at the end of July 1995, but should it be extended the General Assembly had given approval for continuation of the operation. The performance report indicated overall savings of $1.7 million gross, due to lower transport and civilian and military personnel costs than anticipated. The report also indicated that UNIFIL was suffering from a very high level of outstanding assessments, and a very low level of cash. Full reimbursement of troop costs had been made to 31 January 1995, with only partial reimbursement thereafter.

AGENDA ITEM 118: FINANCING OF THE ACTIVITIES ARISING FROM SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 687 (1991)

(a) UNITED NATIONS IRAQ-KUWAIT OBSERVATION MISSION (A/49/863, A/49/902)

20. MR. TAKASU (Controller), introducing the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/49/863, recalled that two thirds of the costs of the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM) was borne by the Kuwaiti Government on a monthly basis, while the remaining one third was based on assessed contributions from Member States. For the one-year financial period November 1993-October 1994, the original cost estimate had been $70 million gross. Actual expenditure had been $58.8 million, leaving an unencumbered balance of $11.1 million. Of that amount $7.8 million had already been credited to Member States and to the Kuwaiti Government against their assessments for 1994. That balance was attributable, on the one hand, to savings in air operations, transport operations, military personnel costs and civilian personnel costs and, on the other, to the generous contribution of the Government of Kuwait for various rental engineering equipment. The Ministry of Public Health of Kuwait had, in addition, been donating medical care and the treatment of personnel, amounting to 24,773 Kuwaiti dinar. On behalf of the

Secretary-General, he expressed appreciation to the Kuwaiti Government for its generous contribution.

21. For the period 1 November 1994-30 June 1995, the cost estimate was $43.7 million, or $5.46 million per month, compared with the Advisory Committee's recommendation of $43 million or $5.3 million per month. For the period 1 July 1995 to 30 June 1996, the cost estimate was $63.9 million, or a monthly figure of $5.3 million. The Advisory Committee had recommended for that period a total of $60 million, or $5 million gross per month. The report of the Secretary-General also provided information concerning the structure of the mission and a number of assumptions used for calculations. The cost parameters were basically the same except with respect to civilian personnel costs and vehicle establishment which had decreased due to the provision by the Kuwaiti Government. He drew attention to the recent relocation of the Doha logistics base and staff accommodation within the newly established UNIKOM support centre situated near Kuwait City.

22. Mr. AL-WAZZAN (Kuwait) expressed satisfaction at the clarity and precision of the report of the Controller. He said that the support centre would enable UNIKOM in general to operate more efficiently. He wished to inform the Committee that, apart from providing two thirds of the budget of the United Nations Iraq Kuwait Observation Mission, the Iraqi Government also made additional voluntary contributions.

23. Mr. Barimani (Islamic Republic of Iran), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

AGENDA ITEM 120: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN EL SALVADOR (continued) (A/49/518/Add.1-2, A/49/458/Add.1)

24. Mr. TAKASU (Controller), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL) (A/49/518/Add.1-2), stated that, while that mission had been successfully completed, it was still necessary to terminate it from a financial point of view. He highlighted the figure of $270,400, representing savings for the period 1 June-30 November 1994. The cost estimate for the period 1 December 1994-30 April 1995 had been $5.2 million gross, including a phased-out deployment. The cost estimate for liquidation of the mission covering the period 1-31 May 1995 was $113,300 gross. Those figures were to be compared with the recommendations made by the Advisory Committee which were as follows: from 1 June-30 November 1994, an appropriation of $11.7 million gross; for December 1994-30 April 1995, an appropriation of just over $4.6 million. For the month of May, the Advisory Committee had approved the amount requested. Financing of the mission could not yet be concluded since a number of payments were yet to be made. Furthermore, a number of assessments remained outstanding. The General Assembly had deferred the issue for some time and no assessment had been made since 1 June 1994. The figure of $11.7 million relating to 1 June-30 November 1994 had not yet been assessed. In total, over $17 million remained to be assessed. ONUSAL was therefore having great difficulty in finalizing the mission. In order to meet cash requirements, it would be necessary to make transfers from the Peace-keeping Reserve Fund. It was to be hoped that the General Assembly would take prompt action on the issue.

AGENDA ITEM 125: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING FORCE IN CYPRUS (continued) (A/49/590/Add.1, A/49/781/Add.1)

25. Mr. TAKASU (Controller), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the financing of the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) (A/49/590/Add.1), drew attention to the performance report covering the period 16 June-31 December 1994. That period represented an extension of the mandate for slightly over six months to coincide with the end of the political mandate. Even though no action had been taken to increase the cost estimate, the performance report reflected a net savings of $249,900 gross, for overexpenditures in certain areas such as military personnel, air operations and miscellaneous services had been offset by savings in others such as civilian personnel, transport and accommodation. With respect to the report of the Advisory Committee (A/49/781/Add.1), he noted that the Advisory Committee recommended that, in future, financial performance reports should be submitted only after conclusion of the period in question (A/49/781/Add.1, para. 5) and that it was not recommending any change in the level of appropriations at that time.

AGENDA ITEM 126: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN GEORGIA (continued) (A/49/429/Add.3, A/49/766/Add.1)

26. Mr. TAKASU (Controller), introducing the report of the Secretary-General (A/49/429/Add.3), said that it contained two performance reports and the budget of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG). The first, covering the period 1 April to 30 June 1994, reflected an unencumbered balance of $89,200 gross, due to decreases in the rental of premises, transport operations and commercial flights. The second, covering the period 1 July 1994-13 January 1995, reflected an unencumbered balance of $3,280,600 gross resulting from savings under civilian personnel costs, transport and air operations, communications and other equipment arising, inter alia, from delays in the deployment of personnel and in procurement. The budget, which covered a period of 11.6 months (from 14 July 1995 to 30 June 1996) and amounted to $16.1 million gross, provided for a strength of 135 military observers. Outstanding contributions stood at over $4 million. However, the Government of Switzerland had made a contribution of $681,000 for support activities of special envoys or missions. He noted that the Advisory Committee was recommending acceptance of the proposals contained in paragraph 85 of the Secretary-General's report (A/49/766/Add.1, para. 19).

AGENDA ITEM 129: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN LIBERIA (continued) (A/49/571/Add.2, A/49/786/Add.1)

27. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) said that since the establishment of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) in 1993, the Security Council had taken a series of actions to extend the latter's mandate. The current mandate would run to 30 June 1995. By its resolution 49/232 the General Assembly had appropriated $17.5 million gross for the period 22 April-22 October 1994 and $4.3 million gross for the period from 23 October 1994-13 January 1995, and had authorized the Secretary-General to enter into commitments, should the Security Council extend the mandate beyond 13 January 1995, at a rate of up to $1.6 million gross per month, with assessment. For the period 14 April-

31 December 1995, the cost estimate was approximately $12.2 million gross or an average monthly cost of $1.4 million gross. For the six-month period 1 January-30 June 1996, the cost estimate was $8 million gross or $1.3 million per month on average. Assessed contributions outstanding amounted to $9.4 million. Therefore UNOMIL would have to borrow from the Peace-keeping Reserve Fund. He drew attention to the recommendations contained in paragraph 45 of the Secretary-General's report to the General Assembly and noted that the Advisory Committee was recommending an appropriation of $8.5 million gross for maintenance of the mission for the period 14 January-30 June 1995 (A/49/796/Add.1, para. 17). Should the Security Council extend the mandate to the end of the year, a further appropriation of $8.5 million would be required.

AGENDA ITEM 131: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS MILITARY LIAISON TEAM IN CAMBODIA (continued) (A/49/521, A/49/913)

28. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) said that the mandate of the United Nations Military Liaison Team in Cambodia (UNMLTC) had formally expired on 15 May 1994. The financial performance report for the period 15 November 1993-15 May 1995 reflected overall savings of $293,900 gross due to lower costs for military personnel, civilian personnel and communications (A/49/521, para. 8). It was recommended that those savings be apportioned among Member States in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the United Nations.

The meeting rose at 11.35 a.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-NINTH SESSION

Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
57th meeting
held on
Monday, 19 June 1995
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 57th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. TEIRLINCK (Belgium)

later: Mr. BARIMANI (Islamic Republic of Iran)
(Vice-Chairman)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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AGENDA ITEM 108: PROGRAMME PLANNING (continued)

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22 June 1995

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The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 130: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS ASSISTANCE MISSION FOR RWANDA (continued) (A/49/375 and Add.1-3 and A/49/501/Add.1)

1. Mr. TAKASU (Controller), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the financing of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (A/49/375/Add.2), noted that, by resolution 997 (1995), the Security Council had extended the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) until 9 December 1995 and authorized a reduction of its force to 1,800. He recalled that, in its resolution 49/20, the General Assembly had decided, with regard to the period beyond 9 December 1994, to authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments for a four-month period, at a monthly rate not to exceed $15 million gross, in connection with the maintenance of the Assistance Mission, provided that any amount above $10.5 million per month should be designated for military personnel costs and specifically justified to the General Assembly through the Advisory Committee. The General Assembly had further requested that revised cost estimates be submitted for the period 10 December 1994 to 9 June 1995 as well as the corresponding performance reports.

2. The Secretary-General's current report contained performance reports covering the periods 22 June to 21 December 1993 and 5 October 1993 to 9 April 1995. The unencumbered balances from those two periods had already been credited to Member States.

3. The revised cost estimate for the operation of UNAMIR for the period from 10 December 1994 to 9 June 1995 was projected at $158,449,600 gross and incorporated the commitment authority which had been authorized for the period from 10 December 1994 to 9 April 1995 by the General Assembly in its resolution 49/20. The estimated cost of maintaining UNAMIR for the period from 10 June to 31 December 1995 was $141,832,300 gross, based on a full military strength of 320 military observers and 5,500 contingent personnel, and on a strength of 90 civilian police. On that basis the Advisory Committee had recommended that the General Assembly appropriate $143,417,100 gross for UNAMIR for the period from 10 December 1994 to 9 June 1995, inclusive of the amount of $60 million gross authorized in paragraph 10 of General Assembly resolution 49/20 for the maintenance of UNAMIR for the period from 10 December 1994 to 9 April 1995.

4. In light of the Council's most recent decision, the cost estimate for the period from 10 June to 31 December 1995 had been reduced from $131,038,700 gross to $109,951,900 gross. That reduction was based on the following assumptions that the total number of troops in the mission area would be reduced to 1,800 by the end of September 1995, that there would be a 10 per cent reduction in the cost of civilian personnel as well as in other general operating expenses, while maintaining the requirements of the military observers, civilian police and air operations, and that there would be an increase in the requirements for the transport of contingent-owned equipment and commercial freight and cartage.

5. Reimbursements to troop-contributing Governments had been made up to March 1995.

6. Mr. BARIMANI (Islamic Republic of Iran), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

AGENDA ITEM 108: PROGRAMME PLANNING (continued) (A/49/6 (in fascicle form), A/49/16 (Parts I and II), A/49/99 and Add.1, A/49/135 and Add.1, A/49/301, A/49/310; A/C.5/49/27 and Add.1; E/1994/4 and E/1994/19)

7. Ms. PEÑA (Mexico), reporting on the informal consultations on agenda item 108, said that no consensus had been reached on either the procedural or the substantive aspects of the proposed draft resolution. As coordinator of the consultations, she would therefore recommend that further consideration should be deferred to the fiftieth session of the General Assembly.

8. Mr. STITT (United Kingdom) pointed out that the budgetary planning cycle was posited on the expectation that the medium-term plan and any revisions thereto would be completed in a non-budget year. The Committee must realize that its chances of making progress on revisions to the medium-term plan during the fiftieth session were virtually nil and it would thus be failing to discharge its responsibilities in the budgetary process. While the United Kingdom had been ready to follow the normal procedures for revising the texts prepared by the Secretary-General, certain of its interlocutors had chosen not to do so and had failed to propose their own revisions.

9. The Committee's failure to discharge its responsibilities represented a serious breakdown in the Organization's budgetary and programme planning process and he therefore proposed that the Bureau should first consider the implications of a decision to defer consideration of the item and report thereon to the Committee.

10. Mr. HANSON (Canada) said that he shared the views just expressed by the representative of the United Kingdom.

11. Miss BUERGO (Cuba) said that the origin of the difficulties could be traced to the Secretariat's failure to properly discharge its mandate and to lack of political will on the part of certain States. While it made little sense to defer a decision, it was difficult to see how agreement could be reached without first resolving the underlying problems.

12. Mr. STITT (United Kingdom) requested that the text of the draft decision regarding deferral of consideration of the item should be circulated in writing so that the Committee would have at least another day before foreclosing on its option to continue efforts to resolve the current situation.

13. Mr. HANSON (Canada) said that he shared the view just expressed by the representative of the United Kingdom. In any case, his delegation would not be in a position at the current stage to agree to postponing further consideration of the item.

14. The CHAIRMAN said that the Bureau would consider the matter with a view to presenting a proposal to the Committee at its next meeting.

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-NINTH SESSION

Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
58th meeting
held on
Friday, 23 June 1995
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 58th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. TEIRLINCK (Belgium)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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AGENDA ITEM 116: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING FORCES IN THE MIDDLE EAST (continued)

(a) UNITED NATIONS DISENGAGEMENT OBSERVER FORCE (continued)

(b) UNITED NATIONS INTERIM FORCE IN LEBANON (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 118: FINANCING OF THE ACTIVITIES ARISING FROM SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 687 (1991) (continued)

(a) UNITED NATIONS IRAQ-KUWAIT OBSERVATION MISSION (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 125: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING FORCE IN CYPRUS (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 126: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN GEORGIA (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 129: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN LIBERIA (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 131: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS MILITARY LIAISON TEAM IN CAMBODIA (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 116: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING FORCES IN THE MIDDLE EAST (continued) (A/C.5/49/L.51 and L.52)

(a) UNITED NATIONS DISENGAGEMENT OBSERVER FORCE (continued)

Draft decision A/C.5/49/L.51

1. Ms. PEÑA (Mexico), Vice-Chairman, reporting on the informal consultations on draft decision A/C.5/49/L.51, said that it had been decided that Member States' respective share of the unencumbered balance of $805,000 gross ($891,000 net) for the period from 1 December 1993 to 30 November 1994 inclusive would be set off against the apportionment falling due to them in respect of whatever future mandate period(s) were approved by the Security Council. She recommended that the draft decision should be adopted without a vote.

2. Draft decision A/C.5/49/L.51 was adopted.

(b) UNITED NATIONS INTERIM FORCE IN LEBANON (continued)

Draft decision A/C.5/49/L.52

3. Ms. PEÑA (Mexico), Vice-Chairman, reporting on the informal consultations on draft decision A/C.5/49/L.52, said that it had been decided that Member States' respective share of the unencumbered balance of $1,755,000 gross ($16,000 net) for the period from 1 February 1994 to 31 January 1995 inclusive would be set off against the apportionment falling due to them in respect of whatever future mandate period(s) were approved by the Security Council. She recommended that the draft decision should be adopted without a vote.

4. Draft decision A/C.5/49/L.52 was adopted.

5. Mr. BARIMANI (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that his country's position on draft decisions A/C.5/49/L.51 and A/C.5/49/L.52 had not changed.

AGENDA ITEM 118: FINANCING OF THE ACTIVITIES ARISING FROM SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 687 (1991) (continued) (A/C.5/49/L.53)

(a) UNITED NATIONS IRAQ-KUWAIT OBSERVATION MISSION (continued)

Draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.53

6. Ms. PEÑA (Mexico), Vice-Chairman, reporting on the informal consultations on draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.53, said that, taking note of the status of contributions to the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission as at 12 June 1995, it had been decided to appropriate to the Special Account referred to in General Assembly resolution 45/260 an amount of $11,748,800 gross ($10,625,600 net) authorized by the Assembly in paragraph 17 of its resolution 48/242.

7. It had also been decided, as an ad hoc arrangement, to apportion the amount of $6,346,900 gross ($4,981,800 net) for the period from 1 November 1994 to 30 June 1995 among Member States, taking into account the amount of $9,133,600 gross ($8,777,900 net) already apportioned among Member States. The Secretary-General had also been authorized to enter into commitments in the amount of $1,811,900 gross ($1,594,100 net) per month, equivalent to one third of the cost of maintenance of the Observation Mission. Those monies should be apportioned in accordance with the scheme set out in the draft resolution, in addition to the two-thirds share of $3,188,100 per month to be met through voluntary contributions from the Government of Kuwait for the period from 1 July 1995 to 30 June 1996, subject to review by the Security Council. She recommended that the draft resolution should be adopted without a vote.

8. Draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.53 was adopted.

AGENDA ITEM 125: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING FORCE IN CYPRUS (continued) (A/C.5/49/L.55)

Draft decision A/C.5/49/L.55

9. Mr. HAMMARSKJÖLD (Sweden), reporting on the informal consultations on draft decision A/C.5/49/L.55, said that the observations and recommendations contained in the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had been endorsed and approved. Although several paragraphs that were traditionally included in such texts had been omitted, the omission would not prejudice future discussions of the issue. He recommended that the draft decision should be adopted without a vote.

10. Draft decision A/C.5/49/L.55 was adopted.

AGENDA ITEM 126: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN GEORGIA (continued) (A/C.5/49/L.54)

Draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.54

11. Ms. EMERSON (Portugal), reporting on the informal consultations on draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.54, said that taking note of the status of contributions to the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia as at 12 June 1995, it had been decided to appropriate to the Special Account authorized and apportioned by General Assembly resolution 49/231 an amount of $6,880,136 gross ($6,468,136 net) for the period from 14 January to 15 May 1995, and an amount of $11,948,718 gross ($11,220,568 net) for the maintenance of the Observer Mission for the period from 16 May 1995 to 12 January 1996; the latter figure included the amount of $3,440,068 gross ($3,234,068 net) authorized and apportioned under the terms of General Assembly resolution 49/231.

12. It had also been decided, as an ad hoc arrangement and taking into account the amount of $3,440,068 gross ($3,234,068 net) already apportioned in accordance with General Assembly resolution 49/231, to apportion an additional amount of $8,508,650 gross ($7,986,500 net) for the period from 16 May 1995 to 12 January 1996. Member States' respective share of the unencumbered balance of $3,714,186 gross ($3,612,298 net) for the period from 7 August 1993 to

13 January 1995 would be set off against the apportionment falling due to them. It was further decided to authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments for a period of 5.7 months at a monthly rate not to exceed $1,334,500 gross ($1,246,000 net) with regard to the period beyond 12 January 1996. He recommended that the draft resolution should be adopted without a vote.

13. Draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.54 was adopted.

AGENDA ITEM 129: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN LIBERIA (continued) (A/C.5/49/L.57)

Draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.57

14. Mr. KELLY (Ireland), reporting on the informal consultations on draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.57, said that the words between square brackets in operative paragraph 4 should be deleted. It had been decided, with regard to the period from 1 July to 31 December 1995, to appropriate to the Special Account the amount of $8,527,300 gross ($7,943,300 net) for the maintenance of the Observer Mission and to apportion those amounts among Member States at the rate of $1,421,200 gross ($1,323,900 net) per month in accordance with the scheme set out in General Assembly resolution 49/232, taking into account the scale of assessments for the years 1995, 1996 and 1997, subject to the extension of the mandate of the Observer Mission by the Security Council. Since the Observer Mission had a very fluid mandate, revised estimates would have to be prepared for the period after 31 December 1995. He recommended that the draft resolution should be adopted without a vote.

15. Draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.57 was adopted.

AGENDA ITEM 131: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS MILITARY LIAISON TEAM IN CAMBODIA (continued) (A/C.5/49/L.58)

Draft decision A/C.5/49/L.58

16. Mr. BARIMANI (Islamic Republic of Iran), Vice-Chairman, reporting on the informal consultations on draft decision A/C.5/49/L.58, said that it had been decided to apportion among Member States, as soon as possible and in accordance with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, credits resulting from the unencumbered balance of $293,900 gross ($281,800 net) for the period from 15 November 1993 to 15 May 1994 and the accrued interest and miscellaneous income of $81,506 in the Special Account for the United Nations Military Liaison Team in Cambodia. He recommended that the draft decision should be adopted without a vote.

17. Draft decision A/C.5/49/L.58 was adopted.

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-NINTH SESSION

Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
59th meeting
held on
Monday, 26 June 1995
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 59th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. TEIRLINCK (Belgium)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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AGENDA ITEM 113: HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT (continued)

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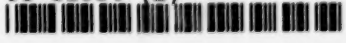
Distr. GENERAL
A/C.5/49/SR.59
11 July 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

95-81084 (E)



The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 113: HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT (continued) (A/C.5/49/13, A/C.5/49/60 and Add.1, A/C.5/49/62; A/C.5/49/CRP.3)

1. Mr. CONNOR (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) said that reform of the internal system of justice was a key component of the new management strategy focusing on efficiency, accountability, responsibility, performance appraisal and the Integrated Management Information System. The two main objectives were to promote efficiency and professionalism. After extensive consultations, the staff had given their full approval to the detailed proposals for reform, set forth in document A/C.5/49/60.

2. The current system of justice was unable to handle expeditiously the volume and complexity of the grievances, appeals and disciplinary cases being presented. The system had been designed at a time when there were only four or five cases a year, handled by perhaps 10 volunteers. Currently there were some 110 cases every year, involving more than 300 staff volunteers. Although that represented a considerable cost in staff time, the results were rarely satisfactory.

3. Machinery for the resolution of disputes had changed considerably in the outside world over the past 50 years, and it was time to bring the Organization into line with a world where transparency, fairness and professionalism were seen as essential parameters. The Organization must move in that direction in the interest of both labour relations and justice.

4. The reform comprised three mechanisms which had proved successful in national civil services: emphasis on early reconciliation and resolution of disputes through mediation; efficient and objective review of grievances to pre-empt litigation; and professionalism of appeals and disciplinary bodies.

5. There was an urgent need for institutional machinery to provide for early reconciliation and mediation. The establishment of ombudsman mediation panels would provide an informal and flexible mechanism that should help to prevent litigation. The absence of any mandatory administrative review of grievances, which had taken place in only 48 of a total of 309 cases in 1994, clogged the system and undermined staff/management relations. Under the new system, administrative review of grievances would be mandatory before any litigation took place.

6. Notwithstanding his agreement in 1988 to endorse unanimous recommendations of the Joint Appeals Board (JAB), the Secretary-General had, owing to legal or policy deviations, endorsed only 50 per cent of those recommendations, which cast severe doubts on the outputs of JAB. In fact, the current system relied heavily on volunteers without legal expertise, in addition to which JAB had been delayed by the time needed to constitute panels and by the fact that staff members were not always available to conclude cases.

7. Those difficulties would be resolved by the establishment of an Arbitration Board. Arbitrators would hear cases in New York and in Geneva, and it was

expected that the time needed for completion of a case would be halved in New York and reduced by two thirds in Geneva. In addition, as part of the professionalization of the internal system of justice, a full-time legal officer would be appointed to the Panel of Counsel.

8. Professionalization would result in considerable savings, since current costs were estimated at a minimum of $800,000 in staff time alone, not including other hidden elements. The new system as a whole would make the best use of the Organization's resources.

9. There was a clear and urgent need for such reforms in the interest of positive staff/management relations and improved efficiency. Both staff and management eagerly sought the proposed changes, and the Committee should not divorce those proposals from those for a streamlined evaluation system. The aim was to stop problems from arising and to deal quickly and, for the most part, informally with those that did. While change was often seen as unsettling, it would be a severe error not to make the changes that were badly needed in the internal system of justice.

10. The CHAIRMAN said he would it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Assembly that it should take note with interest of the introductory statement made by the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management on the two reports of the Secretary-General on the reform of the internal system of justice in the United Nations Secretariat, and to defer in-depth consideration of the two reports to the fiftieth session of the General Assembly, taking into account the relevant recommendations and observations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

11. It was so decided.

12. The CHAIRMAN said he would take it that the Committee wished to take note of the statement on the status of women adopted by the Administrative Committee on Coordination (A/C.5/49/62) and of the detailed information on the practice of the use of retirees in the United Nations Secretariat (A/C.5/49/CRP.3).

13. Ms. GRAHAM (United States of America) said that the status of women was an important issue on which her delegation would look for progress, and she trusted that the Secretary-General would keep the question before the Administrative Committee on Coordination.

14. With regard to the employment of retirees, she noted that of the 573 retired staff members employed in the biennium 1993-1994, 150 had worked for more than 80 days, which represented a significant percentage. It appeared that the hiring of such former staff was done on an ad hoc basis by programme managers, rather than being centralized. Such individuals should be employed only for short-term vacancies, to meet workload peaks or to cover absences.

15. The Secretary-General should submit a comprehensive report on the hiring of retirees, placing the practice within the overall context of personnel policy and paying particular attention to the need for internal controls to ensure that earnings caps were not exceeded. The policy on the use of retirees must be

consistent with Pension Fund regulations. Any increase in the earnings cap should not be a simple reflection of cost-of-living movement, as suggested in the document, but should involve a review of the criteria for the hiring of retirees established in 1982.

16. Ms. ROTHEISER (Austria) said that her delegation would welcome an opportunity to consider the documents in informal consultations, in view of which the Committee should defer taking action on them.

17. The CHAIRMAN said the Committee would proceed accordingly.

The meeting rose at 11.10 a.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
60th meeting
held on
Wednesday, 28 June 1995
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 60th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. TEIRLINCK (Belgium)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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AGENDA ITEM 130: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS ASSISTANCE MISSION FOR RWANDA (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 105: REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)

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Distr. GENERAL
A/C.5/49/SR.60
14 July 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

95-81102 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 130: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS ASSISTANCE MISSION FOR RWANDA (continued) (A/49/375/Add.1-3 and A/49/501/Add.1)

1. Mrs. EMERSON (Portugal), reporting on the consultations regarding the draft resolution on the financing of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda, said that overall agreement had been reached on all aspects of assessment. She said that delegations wished to know the exact amount of the unencumbered balances by 14 July 1995 at the latest. Agreement had been reached on a proposal which would be part of the resolution once confirmation was given that the Advisory Committee would be able to review the report. It read as follows:

> "Decides further that there shall be set off against the apportionment among Member States, as provided in paragraph 10 above, their respective share in the unencumbered balance for the period from 5 April to 9 December 1994, the exact amount to be determined by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions no later than 14 July 1995."

2. Mr. TAKASU (Controller), introducing the Secretary-General's report on financing of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (A/49/375/Add.3), for the period from 5 April to 9 December 1994, said that expenditures for the period had amounted to $145,709,000 gross compared with an amount of $163,038,200 gross appropriated by the General Assembly. The unencumbered balance remaining thus amounted to $17,329,200 gross. That appreciable amount was due to a number of factors: slower deployment of civilian police and of civilian staff ($2.2 million), the non-deployment of United Nations Volunteers, the deployment of fewer helicopters than originally planned, which resulted in a savings of $2,046,100, and the transfer of equipment and supplies from other peace-keeping operations. He stressed, however, that the reprogramming of equipment had contributed substantially to the total savings of $30,847,600. However, part of that amount had been used to offset additional requirements in other areas amounting to $13,489,800. The unencumbered balance thus stood at $17.3 million. Reprogramming was necessary since some of the purchases or contracts had not been completed as at 9 December 1994, owing to the fact that the final total appropriations had been approved by the General Assembly only at the end of November, leaving insufficient lead-time for procurement of some of the equipment. Significant amounts therefore had to be regrouped and requested again for the following period. The advanced planning for procurement instituted in the current year and the annual budget cycle accepted in principle by the General Assembly should help to improve the situation, enabling the Secretariat to plan in advance for procurement so that most of the actions could be completed by the end of the financial period. Addendum 3 proposed that the unencumbered balance should be credited to Member States against their assessment for future financial periods.

3. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that during informal meetings of the Fifth Committee, he had indicated that the Advisory Committee had not yet reviewed the performance report for the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda contained in document A/49/375/Add.3. He understood that delegations had been discussing ways of handling the report in the absence of any information from the Advisory Committee, whose role, he recalled, was precisely to assist the Fifth Committee in the decision-making process. He would again consult members of the Advisory Committee to remind them of the importance that the Fifth Committee attached to receiving its report before 14 July. He was confident that before the Fifth Committee's adjournment on that date, he would be in a position to communicate the results of the Advisory Committee's deliberations on the report in question.

AGENDA ITEM 105: REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/C.5/49/67)

4. Mr. SEVAN (Assistant Secretary-General for Conference and Support Services), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on progress in the implementation of procurement reform in the United Nations Secretariat (A/C.5/49/67), expressed his determination to bring about the necessary reforms for a transparent and effective procurement system aimed at obtaining the best possible quality at the lowest price and the best technically qualified vendors for the services required. Achieving those changes would be a lengthy process, but since the deficiencies in the system had been pinpointed, efforts could be targeted precisely at correcting them. Although there was a time-frame for meeting those targets, he urged the Committee to remember the severe constraints under which the Secretariat was operating, in particular with respect to human resources. Whereas the total value of procurement at Headquarters had risen from $54 million in 1990 to $500 million in 1995, the number of staff members had not been increased proportionately. One of the most serious problems was that of attracting experienced, well-qualified staff to supplement those already in place. Short-term contracts failed to attract suitable candidates, and delays in obtaining approval for funding caused further difficulties. Funds spent for staff resources were at a very low level. There were only 29 Professional-level staff members in charge of the procurement of supplies for over 20 missions as well as for Headquarters.

5. He drew the Committee's attention to the initiation of a training programme for staff of both the Purchase and Transportation Service and the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, offered by the United Nations Office for Project Services in conjunction with Georgetown University. In addition, starting with the United Nations Mission in Haiti, staff were being rotated on a regular basis as part of an ongoing training programme.

6. Plans were being made for the establishment of the office of an Ombudsman by the end of the year, to handle complaints by contractors. The vendor roster numbered over 4,000 and would need to be streamlined. Criteria were being developed for admission to the roster. Decisions regarding removal of vendors from the list should be taken on a case-by-case basis. The mere fact of a dispute did not necessarily justify removal. On the other hand, the United

Nations did have the right to delete or suspend a name on the list, if the circumstances warranted it.

7. Progress had been achieved in the delegation of authority to missions to carry out procurement at the field level and also in the interpretation of financial rule 110.6, whereby the Controller could authorize up to 75 per cent of funding for a mission if there was a reasonable expectation that the mission in question would be renewed.

8. With regard to the Headquarters Committee on Contracts, a full-time P-5 post of Chairman had been established and filled, effective 1 June 1995. The composition of the Committee was also being reviewed to ensure a good representation of different fields of expertise, including legal experts. There were inordinate delays in procurement for peace-keeping and in the Office of Legal Affairs, and efforts were being made to streamline all procedures, to recruit full-time personnel and to avoid costly delays.

9. With respect to financial regulations, he repeated the Secretary-General's statement that the time had come to deregulate the United Nations and return to basic rules and procedures. The endless layers of regulations that had built up over the years absorbed so much time that little was left for actual delivery. Attempts were being made to simplify the rules and to make contracts more comprehensible to contractors. Many of the deficiencies that had been identified were related to the lack of staff. Efforts were being made to pursue as energetically as possible the reforms under way. A fuller report would be submitted to the fiftieth session of the General Assembly.

10. Mr. KUZNETSOV (Russian Federation) said that his delegation fully supported most of the ideas and proposals set out in the Secretary-General's report. The deep concern expressed by Mr. Sevan led him to hope that most of those ideas would indeed be implemented.

11. With respect to paragraph 8, he asked whether the personnel in the Field Administration and Logistics Division (FALD) actually dealt with procurement or whether they submitted requests for procurement which were then handled by the Purchase and Transportation Service.

12. As for paragraph 14, he asked whether it was necessary to appoint an external consultant to review the vendor performance criteria. He inquired as to the functions to be assigned to that person. He asked for details on the functions and procedures of the office of the Ombudsman, which his delegation fully supported. In particular, he wished to know how complaints by offenders and mistakes made by staff would be dealt with. Regarding paragraph 19, he inquired whether the external assistance by Member States would take the form of a working group. In many meetings of the Fifth Committee and within the framework of the report of the working group set up pursuant to General Assembly resolution 48/218, the question of conflicts of interests had been raised. The problem had again been referred to in resolution 49/216C, mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General. Unfortunately, the latter contained no reference to the ideas and proposals made by the intergovernmental working group. The Secretariat should address the question of avoiding conflicts of

interest and ensure that its proposals were properly reflected in the full report on procurement reform. Turning to paragraph 22, he said the acute shortage of staff for procurement was not the main problem. A professional approach, clear-cut organization and effective management were essential. He fully endorsed Mr. Sevan's view that short-term recruitment only served to compound the procurement problem. He fully supported the Secretariat idea for more active cooperation of legal officers in the procurement process.

13. Mr. GOKHALE (India) said that his delegation associated itself with many general comments made by the representative of the Russian Federation. The concerns of many Member States regarding problems in procurement were understood and were finally being acted upon by the Secretariat. He urged that the training programme for procurement personnel should be implemented as widely as possible. He fully supported rotation of personnel in the field. Turning to paragraph 12, he welcomed the progress made in using system contracts and hoped that they were being awarded in keeping with the normal procedure, whereby quotations and bids were sought. He also welcomed the paper of the Department for Development Support and Management Services (DDSMS) and expressed the hope that a transparent system would emerge in time so that Member States could be briefed about the new procedures to be followed.

14. Mr. TOYA (Japan) said that his delegation generally supported most of the ideas put forward in the report. Procurement reform was the most important problem confronting the Secretariat. In that regard, the capacity to react urgently and with the greatest possible transparency to procurement needs was vital. He urged the Secretariat to take whatever immediate action it could. Specific action was needed rather than a fully fledged plan of action. It was essential to proceed immediately with the revision of the financial regulations and standard operating procedures. He hoped that the Secretariat would start the process without delay.

15. Ms. HOLLAND (United Kingdom) said that her delegation welcomed the progress made in resolving the problems identified by the General Assembly and the Board of Auditors. The key was to take action immediately where that was feasible, followed up by further action at the fiftieth session.

16. Mr. SEVAN (Assistant Secretary-General for Conference and Support Services) said that the Secretariat was attempting to do what it could within existing resources to provide a basis on which further progress could be made. With regard to training of procurement staff, it should be borne in mind that procurement officers were trained at Headquarters and then went to the field. Funding for a consultant to review vendor performance criteria was in the proposed programme budget for the next biennium, and there was certainly a need for outside expertise, which could, perhaps, be made available to the United Nations without charge by a Member State. The review of the vendor roster would be conducted in consultation with Member and Observer States.

17. There was also a need to establish the office of Ombudsman to deal with vendor complaints. The post would be established from within existing resources and would not duplicate any existing machinery. Efforts to improve

relationships with vendors would ultimately improve the procurement process itself.

18. The CHAIRMAN said that he would take it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Assembly that it should welcome the progress made in the implementation of procurement reform in the United Nations Secretariat.

19. Mr. STÖCKL (Germany) said that his delegation wanted to be quite sure that any decision by the Committee did not endorse all the proposals in annex II to the report, the points of which must be discussed in the context of a comprehensive report without there being any suggestion of prior approval.

20. Ms. ROTHEISER (Austria), supported by Mr. SCOTTI (France) and Mr. DJACTA (Algeria), proposed that the Committee should take note of the report and welcome the efforts made so far by the Secretary-General as well as his intention to submit a comprehensive report on procurement to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session.

21. The CHAIRMAN said that he would thus take it that the Committee wished to take note of the report contained in document A/C.5/49/67, to welcome the efforts of the Secretary-General in the implementation of procurement reform in the United Nations Secretariat, and to welcome also the intention of the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report on the matter to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session.

22. It was so decided.

23. Mr. SEVAN (Assistant Secretary-General for Conference and Support Services) said that the Secretariat would welcome comments from delegations in its preparation of a comprehensive report.

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-NINTH SESSION

Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
61st meeting
held on
Friday, 30 June 1995
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 61st MEETING

Chairman: Mr. TEIRLINCK (Belgium)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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AGENDA ITEM 105: REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 113: HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 132: ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY ASPECTS OF THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS (continued)

(a) FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS (continued)

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

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Distr. GENERAL
A/C.5/49/SR.61
11 July 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

95-81132 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 105: REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)

1. Mr. SCOTTI (France), speaking on behalf of the European Union and supported by Mr. SHARP (Australia), Mr. CARMICHAEL (Canada), Mr. JU Kuilin (China), Mr. MOSOLO (Lesotho) and Mr. AMARI (Tunisia), expressed shock and dismay at the recent press criticism of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. The European Union did not share the perception of the functioning of the Advisory Committee reflected in the article in question and wished to reiterate its support for the Advisory Committee and its Chairman. The latter's re-election to membership of the Advisory Committee by the General Assembly and to the chairmanship of that Committee by its membership was ample testimony to the confidence placed in him.

2. The CHAIRMAN said that he was shocked by the tendentious nature of the article carried in The New York Times of 23 June 1995. The response of the Committee, the Secretariat and all those who worked on behalf of the Organization should be to close ranks and assume their respective responsibilities fully in order to ensure that the Advisory Committee's work was not adversely affected.

AGENDA ITEM 113: HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT (continued) (A/C.5/49/63 and A/C.5/49/64)

3. Mr. HALLIDAY (Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management) said that the report of the Secretary-General on the revised costs of staff representation activities during the biennium 1990-1991 (A/C.5/49/63) was being submitted in accordance with the request contained in General Assembly resolution 49/222 that the Secretary-General should issue a corrigendum to his report on the costs of staff representation activities (A/C.5/47/59). The report before the Committee contained the most recent information provided by the various duty stations. The amounts were the actual costs of the full-time release of senior members of Staff Councils from their substantive duties, together with the cost of Secretariat support.

4. The Committee had expressed concern over the lack of a clear definition of "a reasonable amount of time" for the conduct of staff activities. Such clarity would permit staff representatives to make better use of the time available to them for Staff Council activities, which should not be to the detriment of their own career objectives.

5. At the recently concluded nineteenth session of the Staff-Management Coordinating Committee (SMCC) held at Amman, Jordan, both management and staff representatives had acknowledged that it had been difficult in the past to keep track of the time which staff representatives devoted to staff activities, and had reached agreement on what constituted "a reasonable amount of time" for staff representatives at all levels in the nine major duty stations effectively to discharge their responsibilities. Management and staff had also stressed the

value of consultations with each other and the contribution made by each to the work of the Organization.

6. It would be premature for him to introduce the report formally, as the Secretary-General had not yet had a chance to consider it. He would, however, be happy to share whatever additional information he had with the Committee during informal consultations.

7. Mrs. GRAHAM (United States of America) noted with satisfaction that the Bureau had heeded the comments made at the previous meeting about the documents under consideration. It was important not to let the current year go by without giving full consideration to an issue which had both budgetary and policy implications. Her delegation looked forward to more in-depth consideration of the documents during informal consultations.

8. Mrs. EMERSON (Portugal), supported by Mr. MADDENS (Belgium), said that her Government supported staff representation and was particularly gratified to note that relations between staff and management were becoming more transparent. It was important for the Secretary-General to keep channels of communication open with his staff in order to ensure their participation in matters pertaining to staff welfare, thereby contributing to the smooth functioning of the Organization.

9. As staff members of the Organization, staff representatives enjoyed the same benefits and were subject to the same obligations as other staff. They must therefore fulfil their obligations to the Organization even as they defended the welfare of the staff. Questions of mobility, accountability, performance and performance appraisal applied to staff representatives in the same way as they did to other staff. She hoped that the recent meeting of SMCC would help to bring about a more productive relationship between the management and staff of the Organization.

10. The CHAIRMAN said that the item would be considered in informal consultations the following week.

AGENDA ITEM 132: ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY ASPECTS OF THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS (continued)

(a) FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS (continued) (A/49/717 and Corr.1-2 and A/49/904)

11. Mr. HOSANG (Director, Peace-keeping Financing Division) recalled that, in its decision 49/469 concerning the support account for peace-keeping operations, the General Assembly had authorized, for the period from 1 January to 30 June 1995, 346 established posts in the amount of $14,105,900. It had further authorized, for a period of six months, $86,000 under general temporary assistance for the position of Special Adviser to the Secretary-General, and also resources for a period of three months for overtime, travel on official business, training and general temporary assistance. Since the authorizations were due to expire that day, the Secretary-General was requesting their extension for the month of July, pending consideration of the item by the Committee at its current resumed session.

12. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Fifth Committee should recommend to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft decision:

"The General Assembly

Decides to maintain the current level of resources approved under the support account for peace-keeping operations for the month of July 1995."

13. The draft decision was adopted.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

14. Mr. SHARP (Australia) noted from the tentative programme of work that there was still a long list of issues pending on the agenda of the resumed forty-ninth session. It was therefore an opportune time to review the decision taken in December 1991 regarding the rationalization of the work of the Fifth Committee and the biennialization of its programme of work.

15. The CHAIRMAN said that he had prepared a conference room paper on the review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations which contained proposals for changing the Committee's pattern of work, including the question of biennialization. That paper would be discussed in informal consultations the following week.

The meeting rose at 11.00 a.m.